

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SAI-01

TRSE-00 OPIC-03 SCCT-01 OPR-02 SAM-01 /068 W

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R 191420Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4317

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5527

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 5399

SUMMARY: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY VOTED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO THREE WESTERN EUROPEAN EVENTS. VASCO VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA MAY BE NAMED AMBASSADOR TO US. WORKERS COMMISSIONS DEMONSTRATION IN LISBON DRAWS 10,000 PARTICIPANTS. ANTI-INDEPENDENCE DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE SEPTEMBER 18 IN MADEIRA. END SUMMARY

1. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES TO COUNCIL OF EUROPE, EFTA, NATO: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY VOTED SEPT 18 TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO SEVERAL UPCOMING EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES. ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT HENRIQUE DE BARROS (PS) WILL ADDRESS COUNCIL OF EUROPE OCTOBER 3. ASSEMBLY DELEGATIONS MADE
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UP OF PS, PPD AND CDS DEPUTIES WILL ATTEND OCTOBER 13 - 14 MEETING

OF EFTA PARLIAMENTARIANS AND WILL VISIT NATO INSTALLATIONS IN BRUSSELS ON OCTOBER 20 AND 21. PCP AND MDP DEPUTIES ARE BOYCOTTING ALL THESE ACTIVITIES AS BEING OUTSIDE ASSEMBLY'S COMPETENCE.

2. COMMENT: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES POINTS UP MAJOR PARTIES' CONVICTION THAT, AS SOLE ELECTED ORGAN OF POLITICAL POWER IN PORTUGAL, ASSEMBLY IS EMBODIMENT OF WILL OF PEOPLE. PCP HAS REPORTEDLY DECIDED TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS HELD BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE DAYS BUSINESS. SHOULD PCP, IN FACT, PARTICIPATE IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY DISCUSSIONS AND SHOULD PCP MODIFY ITS DECISION ON PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN MEETINGS, IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANT TACTICAL SHIFT TOWARD SOFTER LINE, AS HAS BEEN RUMORED.

3. FUNCHAL DEMONSTRATION: CROWD REPORTEDLY NUMBERING IN THOUSANDS PARTICIPATED IN SEPT 18 DEMONSTRATION AGAINST MADEIRAN INDEPENDENCE IN FUNCHAL. DEMONSTRATION WAS ORGANIZED BY LOCAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. NO INCIDENTS OCCURRED DURING DEMONSTRATION BUT THREE SMALL BOMBS EXPLODED IN FUNCHAL LATER SAME NIGHT. PURPORTED "FLAMA" DEADLINE OF SEPT 17 (SUBSEQUENTLY DISAVOWED BY "FLAMA") PASSED WITHOUT THREATENED EXPULSION OF ANTI-SEPARATISTS (REFTEL).

4. DIPLOMATIC POSSIBILITIES: RELIABLE SOCIALIST SOURCE TOLD EMBASSY ON SEPT 19 THAT VASCO VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA, FINANCE MINISTER IN FIRST POST APRIL 25 GOVERNMENT AND LATER MINISTER OF ECONOMY FOR ANGOLA, MAY BE NAMED AS AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES. AMERICAN OFFICIALS FOUND ALMEIDA TO BE VERY BRIGHT AND FRIENDLY. HE IS TO BE NAMED, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, BECAUSE OF HIS ECONOMIC EXPERTISE.

5. DEMONSTRATIONS:

-- 300 WORKERS' COMMISSIONS FROM LISBON INDUSTRIAL BELT, SUPPORTED BY COMMUNIST PARTY, ASSEMBLED 10,000 DEMONSTRATORS IN LISBON EVENING OF SEPT 18. THEME OF DEMONSTRATION WAS STRUGGLE AGAINST REACTIONARY FORCES.

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-- THE FAR-LEFT MRPP CELEBRATED ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY WITH SEVERAL DEMONSTRATIONS SEPT 18, AND CLASHED WITH THE MUCH LARGER WORKERS' COMMISSION DEMONSTRATION ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

-- STRIKE OF SMALL FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS OF ALENTEJO ENDED TODAY FOLLOWING A SEPT 18 MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE PINHEIRO AZEVEDO. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE NEW MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE WOULD MEET WITH WORKERS' GROUPS FROM THE THREE

REGIONS NEXT MONDAY.

6. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF MAJOR SHIFT TO CENTER OF NEW
CABINET, DEMONSTRATIONS AND STRIKES WILL BE WATCHED CAREFULLY
AS AN INDICATION OF PCP AND FAR-LEFT REACTION TO THE STRIKING
REVERSAL IN THEIR INFLUENCE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VOTING, INDEPENDENCE, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, AMBASSADORS, LABOR UNIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON05527
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750326-0265
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750936/aaaabfmt.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 5399
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <23 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: PINT, PO, (ALMEIDA, VASCO VIEIRA DE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006